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Patrick Henry, from 1765 almost to the time of his death in 1799; Thomas Ritchie, from 1807 for more than forty years. There has been no Virginian since Ritchie who filled for so long a time so important a place in the state.

Thomas Ritchie, the son of a Scotch merchant of large affairs, was born in Essex County, Virginia, in 1778, and died in Washington in 1854. On the maternal side Ritchie was connected with a number of Virginians of great influence in his day. In 1804 Mr. Jefferson, desirous of seeing a good administration newspaper published at Richmond, established through his friends the Richmond *Enquirer*, and Thomas Ritchie was placed in charge as editor. Ritchie was editor of the *Enquirer* (was the *Enquirer*) until 1845, when he removed to Washington to take over the administration organ there. He left the *Enquirer* in the hands of his sons.

This is the briefest statement of the public service of a man who for more than a generation was one of the chief sources and shapers of opinion in the South. And for nearly thirty years after 1820 Ritchie was one of the most quoted of editors in the United States. Professor Ambler, therefore, in choosing his subject has faced difficulties. These he has overcome in large measure by using diligently and with judgment the files of the *Enquirer* itself. The result of his work forms not only a contribution to the study of Virginia politics, but necessarily of national politics as well.

ALFRED J. MORRISON.

WEBSTER'S SECONDARY SCHOOL DICTIONARY. Abridged from Webster's New International Dictionary. 1,000 illustrations. New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company. \$1.50.

As the title indicates, this is an abridgment of the *New International Dictionary*, which is designed for the use of pupils in secondary schools, but it will fill a long-felt want in our colleges for a reliable dictionary at a moderate price. The editors have succeeded in making their definitions unusually clear and concise, and in the case of varying pronunciation and spelling, have been careful to record alternatives. The illustrations are fresh and clear, the paper is good, the typographical work excellent,

the binding neat and strong. With such a book in hand, pupils should find the study of the dictionary a fascinating as well as a profitable pastime.

THE SCIENCE OF ENGLISH ETYMOLOGY. By Walter W. Skeat. Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press.

One of the last volumes, if not the very last volume, from the pen of the distinguished Cambridge scholar, the Reverend Walter W. Skeat, this book is a study of comparative etymology considered from the point of view of English. After a discussion of some general principles and useful canons, the book takes up in separate chapters the relations between English and the various Romance, Teutonic, and Indo-Germanic languages, so as to "illustrate some of the ways in which those languages throw light upon each other, and to show how many really valuable lessons can be drawn from considering even a single English word from various points of view." The author makes no claim to originality either in method or material, setting forth "only such things as are vouched for by experts who can be trusted." On account of its clear, simple and scientific statement of principles and its wealth of examples, the book should find a place in advanced courses in linguistics in our colleges and universities.

WHAT CAN LITERATURE DO FOR ME? By C. Alphonso Smith, Poe Professor of English Literature, University of Virginia. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company.

The suggestive question in the above title is answered in six chapters, under the following heads: I. It Can Give You an Outlet; II. It Can Keep Before You the Vision of the Ideal; III. It Can Give You a Better Knowledge of Human Nature; IV. It Can Restore the Past to You; V. It Can Show You the Glory of the Commonplace; VI. It Can Give You the Mastery of Your Own Language. Each chapter is a clear, simple discussion of the principles announced, reënforced by abundant and well-chosen illustrations. The author directs attention first to the reading and study of literature itself, showing that litera-